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AUTHOR Chevrette, John M.
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ABSTRACT

Eight hundred twenty-nine health or physical education cooperating teachers in south central Texas were evaluated by their student teachers after they had completed their student teaching and returned to campus. Individual rating charts listed 14 teacher characteristics and provided for the responses: "excellent," "adequate," "poor," and "unknown." Findings revealed that characteristics dealing with orientation, acceptance and friendliness, student teacher responsibilities, and realistic teaching experiences each had response ratings greater than 90 percent when the excellent and adequate categories of the questionnaire were combined. The characteristics dealing with professional growth, self-evaluation, appropriate level of achievement, and the use of instructional materials had response ratings ranging from 75 to 84 percent. All characteristics evaluated had response ratings greater than 75 percent when the excellent and adequate categories were combined. Recommendations are made for further study. (JD)

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SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL COOPERATING TEACHERS AS EVALUATED BY STUDENT TEACHERS

BY

JOHN M. CHEVRETTE
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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PURPOSE

It is a common procedure in all student teaching programs to evaluate student teachers and to place substantial emphasis on the rating in giving recommendations for employment or graduate school admissions. A less common, and much needed procedure, is that of having the student teacher evaluate the public school cooperating teacher to whom he/she has been assigned. A number of years ago, the worthwhileness of this procedure was recognized in the Department of Health and Physical Education at Texas A&M University.

The purpose of this study was to summarize the evaluations of public school cooperating teachers working with student teachers in health or physical education during the academic semesters beginning September 1973 and ending December 1982, excluding summer sessions. The evaluations were made exclusively by the student teachers.

METHOD

The cooperating teachers involved in the study supervised student teachers from the Department of Health and Physical Education at Texas A&M University and met all the qualifications required by the Teacher Education Cooperative Center and the College of Education. All student teachers were predominantly in physical education with a small number, less than 10%, in health education. The student teaching program at Texas A&M University is a block program in which students are assigned full time to a public school for a period of eight weeks.

A total of 829 cooperating teachers were evaluated. The evaluators were 656 health or physical education student teachers who had been assigned in one of 12 independent school districts located in south central Texas and within a 200 mile radius of the Texas A&M University campus in College Station. One hundred and one different school campuses were utilized ranging from the elementary level through high school. The evaluations were completed after the student had completed student teaching and had returned to the campus for debriefing. Student teachers seeking all-level certification who were assigned two cooperating teachers were asked to complete an evaluation for each teacher thus explaining the discrepancy between the number of student teachers and the number of cooperating teachers.

SUPERVISING TEACHER EVALUATION

Place a check mark in the appropriate box.

	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Unknown
Assisted in orienting you to total school environment				
Created atmosphere of acceptance, friendliness and belonging				
Delegated and clarified student teacher responsibilities				
Demonstrated effective methods and techniques				
Used cooperative planning in contributing to the teaching-learning situation				
Assisted in selecting and using basic instructional materials				
Assisted in obtaining and using new and supplementary instructional materials				
Assisted in achieving realistic teaching experiences				
Assisted in setting up levels of achievement appropriate to your development				
Encouraged self-evaluation				
Encouraged continued professional growth through participation in professional organizations				
Encouraged initiative and creativity				
Assisted in developing techniques of classroom management				
Provided constructional criticism whenever necessary				

FREQUENCY OF RATINGS

(N = 829)

The following table displays the frequency of ratings' and percentage for each characteristic evaluated.

	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Unknown
Assisted in orienting you to total school environment	560(68%)	219(26%)	46(5%)	2(1%)
Created atmosphere of acceptance, friendliness and belonging	683(82%)	113(14%)	25(3%)	6(1%)
Delegated and clarified student teacher responsibilities	496(59%)	272(33%)	58(7%)	3(1%)
Demonstrated effective methods and techniques	475(58%)	236(29%)	76(9%)	37(4%)
Used cooperative planning in contributing to the teaching-learning situation	457(56%)	259(31%)	93(11%)	14(2%)
Assisted in selecting and using basic instructional materials	419(51%)	275(33%)	80(10%)	54(6%)
Assisted in obtaining and using new and supplementary instructional materials	336(41%)	303(37%)	77(9%)	104(13%)
Assisted in achieving realistic teaching experiences	606(73%)	169(20%)	39(5%)	14(2%)
Assisted in setting up levels of achievement appropriate to your development	415(50%)	254(31%)	71(9%)	89(10%)
Encouraged self-evaluation	412(50%)	260(31%)	93(11%)	61(8%)
Encouraged continued professional growth through participation in professional organizations	348(42%)	272(33%)	87(11%)	118(14%)
Encouraged initiative and creativity	483(59%)	243(30%)	74(9%)	19(2%)
Assisted in developing techniques of classroom management	511(62%)	202(24%)	60(7%)	53(7%)
Provided constructional criticism whenever necessary	524(63%)	187(23%)	97(12%)	19(2%)

RESULTS

1. Characteristics dealing with orientation, acceptance and friendliness, student teacher responsibilities, and realistic teaching experiences each had response rates greater than 90% when the excellent and adequate categories of the questionnaire were combined.

2. In the same manner, the characteristics dealing with professional growth, self-evaluation, appropriate level of achievement and the use of instructional materials had response rates ranging from 75% to 84%.

3. All characteristics evaluated had response rates greater than 75% when the excellent and adequate categories were combined.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The following general conclusions appear to be in order on the basis of the results of this study:

1. Public school teachers, as evaluated by student teachers, generally perform well on the characteristics evaluated in this study.
2. Certain characteristics evaluated in the study such as professional growth and purchase and use of materials may not be applicable and difficult to evaluate by student teachers.

The drawing of specific conclusions is difficult in a study of this nature. Conclusions may vary depending on the interpretation placed on the categories used. If the category 'excellent' is examined by itself, certain findings are highlighted about specific characteristics. In the same manner, if the categories 'excellent' and 'adequate' are combined as one looks at the results, different conclusions may be reached. The results of this study combined the two categories. The combining of the 'poor' and 'unknown' category does not appear to be valid in the drawing of conclusions as 'unknown' in some cases can be interpreted by the evaluator to mean 'not applicable'.

It is recommended that further study be done in this critical area of evaluation. Specifically, more effective use of cooperatively planned in-service meetings keeping in mind the areas revealed in this study where improvement is needed. Also, constant revision of the questionnaire using input from student teachers and practitioners would appear desirable.